

# PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE MESSAGE

Name and Grade of Action Officer MSgt John Gereaux				Office Symbol RSOPA		Series Number 103		Signature of Action Officer		Review Date	
	To	Action	Initials/Date		To	Action	Initials/Date		To	Action	Initials/Date
1	RSOP/ CCU	Coord	RSOP _____ CCU _____	5				9			
2	JA	Coord	JA _____	6				10			
3	RSO/ CCU	APPR	RSO _____ CCU _____	7				11			
4	RSOPA	X-MIT	_____	8				12			

FROM: HQ AFRS/RSO

SUBJECT: Tattoo/Body Marking Guidance

TO: All Recruiting Personnel

1. This is guidance to assist you in determining acceptability of applicants with tattoos/body markings.
2. This is the Air Force policy on tattoos per AFI 36-2903, table 2.5, item 6:
  - a. **“Unauthorized (content):** Tattoos/Brands anywhere on the body that are obscene, advocate sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination are prohibited in and out of uniform. Tattoos/brands that are prejudicial to good order and discipline, or of a nature that tends to bring discredit upon the Air Force are prohibited in and out of uniform.”
  - b. **“Inappropriate (military image):** “Excessive tattoos/brands will not be exposed or visible (includes visible through the uniform) while in uniform. Excessive is defined as any tattoo/brands that exceed ¼ of the exposed body part and those above the collarbone and readily visible when wearing an open collar uniform.” NOTE: “Members should not be allowed to display excessive tattoos that would detract from an appropriate professional image while in uniform.”
3. What is considered an exposed body part? Arms (Males/Females): Approximately one inch above the elbow to the fingertips (with fingers extended). Legs (Females): Top of the kneecap to just below the ankle. If the authorized tattoo(s) covers more than 1/4 (25%) of the entire exposed body part or if it detracts from an appropriate professional image while in uniform, the applicant is not qualified to enter the AF.
4. There are no provisions to allow an applicant with disqualifying body markings to process or ship on the condition that the markings will be removed once on active duty.
5. Finally, all **applicants should be briefed** that once they are qualified, additional tattoos or brands may render them unqualified for service. Recruiters should encourage their applicants awaiting shipping not to risk the serious infection or disqualification that could result from inappropriate tattoos or brands. **Attached are samples of disqualifying tattoos.**
6. Use this guidance along with AFI/AETCI 36-2002 to make determinations; however, in questionable cases, feel free to e-mail photos to AFRS/RSOPA for an eligibility determination.

FOR THE COMMANDER

////////// Signed //////////  
 JAMES R. HOLADAY, Colonel, USAF  
 Chief, Operations Division

## SAMPLE OF DISQUALIFYING TATTOOS



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